

NEWS from

The Savannah River Site



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For Immediate Release

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF SRS ON THE PUBLIC REMAINS LOW, SAYS 2002 SRS ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING REPORT

AIKEN, S.C., (Sept. 18, 2003) — The potential impact of the Savannah River Site (SRS) on the offsite public continues to be far below the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) all-pathway dose standard of 100 millirem per year, according to the *SRS Environmental Report for 2002*.

The largest radiation dose that any single offsite individual could have received from SRS operations in 2002 is estimated to be 0.18 millirem (a millirem is a standard unit of measure for radiation exposure), which is only 0.18 percent of the DOE standard. This estimated dose also is well under the natural average dose of about 300 millirem per year to people in the United States—and slightly less than the revised 2001 dose of 0.19 millirem.

Compliance with environmental regulations and with DOE orders related to environmental protection provides assurance that onsite processes do not impact the environment adversely. Such compliance is documented in the 2002 environmental report, which is being distributed this week to interested members of the public and site employees.

SRS had a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) compliance rate of 99.8 percent in 2002, slightly higher than the 99.6 percent rate reported in 2001. The NPDES program protects streams, reservoirs, and other wetlands by limiting all nonradiological releases. Discharge limits are set for each facility to ensure that SRS operations do not impact aquatic life negatively or degrade water quality.

Effluent monitoring and environmental surveillance are conducted extensively within a 2000-square-mile network reaching 25 miles from SRS – with some monitoring performed as far as 100 miles from the site. The area includes neighboring cities, towns, and counties in Georgia and South Carolina. Thousands of samples of air, rainwater, surface water, drinking water, groundwater, food products, wildlife, soil, sediment, and vegetation were collected and analyzed for radioactive and nonradioactive contaminants.

SRS did not receive any notices of violation (NOVs) under the Safe Drinking Water Act or the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act in 2002. Five NOVs were issued in association with the NPDES program and one under the Clean Air Act.

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Copies of the site's environmental report again are available in hard-copy format and on a CD located inside the back cover of the report. Annual (2002) reports from a number of other site organizations are included on the CD. The report also can be accessed on the World Wide Web at the following address:
<http://www.srs.gov/general/pubs/ERsum/index.html>

SRS environmental reports have been produced for some 47 years. Copies are distributed to government officials, universities, public libraries, environmental and civic groups, news media, and interested individuals.

If you would like to receive a copy of the report, call or write to:

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